

The Calvary Messenger

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The Newsletter of the
Calvary Armenian Congregational Church of San Francisco
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A View from Calvary

Rev. Nerses Balabanian
Pastor

2015-2016 Coming Events

Saturday, November 14

CACC Food Festival

Sunday, November 22

Thanksgiving

Saturday, December 19

Christmas Celebration

Sunday, December 20

Christmas Worship Service

Sunday, January 3

Armenian Christmas

Sunday, January 31

Annual Meeting

So he, trembling and astonished, said,
“Lord, what do You want me to do?”
(Acts 9:6)



**Lord, what do you want
to do through me?**

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CACC 2015-2016

Our theme of the year is: **“Lord, what do you want to do through me?”** The concept is based on the biblical events when God calls humans to follow Him and serve Him. The theme is taken from the book of Acts. Paul was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christians when Christ appeared to him. Paul’s response to the call of Jesus was: **“Lord, what do you want me to do?”** (Acts 9:3-6 NKJV).

The same call comes to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. There is a call to each of us. Abraham was called to leave and move on to a new land (“You are Called to Trust and Obey”). Jonah was called to be a messenger of God in an unwanted place (“You are Called Where?”). Esther was called to be the queen of a great King of Persia to save her people (“You are called to Take Risks”). Peter was called to leave his boat and his security and walk on the water to learn to trust God

in the storms (“You are Called to Act and Invest”).

We all have jobs, whether at home or at the workplace. Jobs will end or they will change. Jobs are a means to provide us with the income to sustain us. But more importantly, we all have a vocation, a calling that is from God. Do you know your calling? Do you know where God is calling you? Can you open your gift and use it for His kingdom? This means that you need to hear His call, get up from your La-Z-Boy chair, and invest in the talents He has given you. We are called God’s workmanship. Get out and act. Paul says” **For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10 ESV)**

Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church
Daily Vacation Bible School Report
July 6 - August 7, 2015

Pastor Sevag Trashian



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to our brothers and sisters at The Calvary Armenian Congregational Church San Francisco. We praise God for your enthusiasm and zeal in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. Your moral and financial support to our children's ministry and specifically to our **Daily Vacation Bible School** has been a great blessing. We thank you for your gift of 500 US dollars that was given to us for the 2015 DVBS program.

Our general theme for this year was "Praise Him". It

included (Praising God for His power, love, providence, authority and greatness) and around 150 children attended our DVBS program. Ms. Liza Barsumian and 14 leaders made up our teaching staff.



The Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church considers children's ministry as an essential part of its mission. In addition to our



Sunday school program, we give great importance to the **Daily Vacation Bible School** program. We plan and put every effort into having it every summer. As a neighborhood church in the Nor Amanos area, it is our calling to be the light and salt to the community surrounding us through every ministry we are involved in. Hence the primary mission of the DVBS is to gather and attract the children from our neighborhood to attend our program where they will hear God's Word and receive love and care. The summer school with its mission has had and still has a great impact on the ministry of The Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church.

1. It has connected many families of previous summer school students' parents to the Church.
2. It has promoted and boosted our Sunday school program which we have every Sunday during the school year.
3. It has helped in bringing new students to the Armenian Evangelical E.P. Torossian school which is an essential part of our mission field.

It brings us great Joy to have 150 children on our campus every summer, singing and praising God with joyful music and prayers. We evaluate our mission every year and ask God to fill us with passion and zeal and insight into new methods and ways through which we can serve "the little ones" so that they come near to Jesus and hear his words and experience his love.



Vacation Bible Camp

Aileen Hartunian

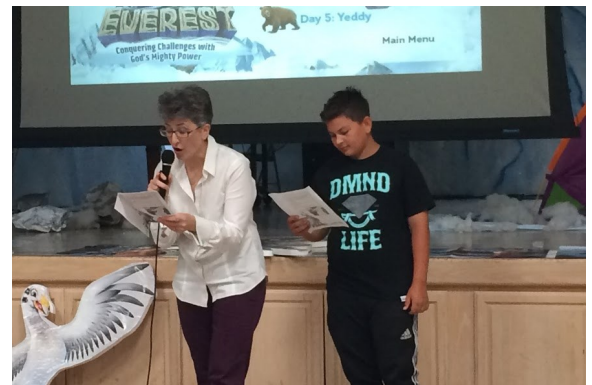


This year's theme was Everest-Conquering Challenges with God's Mighty Power. Almost sixty children learned about God's love through the "Everest Bible Buddies," Klymer, Yeddy, Cliff, Mallory and Pike.

Martha Missirlian opened each day by introducing the day's character and Bible verse and presenting an interesting skit. After the day's opening it was time for the children's lesson. Teachers, Caroline Sagherian, Marge Damir, Sevan Balabanian, Matthew Silverman,

Martha Missirlian, Lindsey and Joshua Sivaslian all worked hard to prepare an engaging session for the children, who were divided into groups by age.

Healthy snacks and delicious lunches were provided by our volunteers and donors Suzie Vehouni, Lorena Asdourian, Margo Gulesserian, Seta Tujian, Rose and Mihran Sagatelian, Alice Eldemir, Nanor Sadakian, Yvonne Minassian and Harout Aroyan. Kitchen assistants, Nareg Hannessian, Garen Vehouni, Talar Istanboulian, Gabe Damir and Mike Damir did an amazing job. Early in the week, a representative of Recology came in to educate the kids on how to manage waste and compost their snack/lunch. Each day, two of the older children were elected as compost leaders and they led the other children in composting.



This year we had a crew leader sitting at each table making sure activities went smoothly and tables were cleaned. The crew leaders were Michelle Torchiyan, Shant Kilijian, Sophia Avanesian, Aaron Avanesian, Arlene Keshishian and Aileen Hartunian.

As always, Rene Avanesian did an amazing job coordinating registration and the many materials needed for the week's crafts. It was a family affair for the Avanesians. Not only did she and her children volunteer, but also her husband, Jano, taught interested children basketball during the part of the day when children could choose a free-time activity. Other choices for the children included a knitting station and Legos.

Each day, Pastor Nerses closed with a fun lesson and demonstration for the kids. There were other special activities during the week, including time dedicated to missions. The kids were introduced to what missionaries do in other countries such as Matthew Silverman in Haiti, Lindsey Sivaslian in Japan and had an opportunity to Skype with Nanor Balabanian in Armenia. This year's mission project was supporting Vacation Bible School in Kessab, Syria. Sevan and Pastor Nerses skyped with Pastor Jiro Ghazarian in Kessab.



The children were able to ask questions about rebuilding after the attack by militants. The children brought in money during the week and raised over \$400 to help VBS in Kessab!



In addition to lessons and games, Sevan coordinated the week's volunteers. There were the volunteers mentioned above and many student volunteers: Yerem Istanboulian trained Shant Kilijian as sound manager and Rachel Sagherian and Aris Bussey acted as our photographers.

Bravo, everyone, on a job well done!

A Memorable Weekend at CACC

Sevan Balabanian



October 15-18 was a very memorable weekend for our church. On the occasion of the 96th Annual Meeting of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), we were honored to host guests from all over the world.

On October 15-16, and before the start of the AMAA meetings, the **Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWC)** held its annual meeting at the church. The AEWC brings together the following church unions and

organizations: Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, the Armenian Evangelical Union of France, the Union of the Evangelical Church of Armenia, the Armenian Evangelical Union of Eurasia, the Armenian Evangelical Fellowship of Europe, the Philibosian Foundation and the Armenian Missionary Association of America.



On October 17, the **AMAA** held its Annual Meeting at the church. The service of the AMAA reaches 24 countries. Representatives from all over the globe gave their reports and shared their concerns. The meeting concluded with a banquet at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront in Burlingame, CA.



The Sunday service on October 18th was a true celebration as we raised our voices together in praise and worship.

I want to thank all the members of the Hospitality Committee and the Banquet Committee who did a superb job and all those who offered their time and services in organizing, planning, cooking, driving, cleaning and hosting. May God be glorified.

Save the Date

AEUNA/AEYF 2016 Biennial Convention

June 23-26, Hosted by the Armenian Evangelical Church of Chicago

Missions Corner

Mission Report of Armenia

Dr. Nazareth Bosnoyan

Evangelism in Armenia is against the law, both the government and the Orthodox church are openly against it. Nevertheless, the gospel is not arrested, every church I visited on Sundays was packed with people for worship service. People were very attentive to the preaching and actively participated in worship. There was no formalism in the church, people worshipped freely and their faith in God was evident in their expressions. It was real and genuine. This was exciting and emotionally moving for me to see and be part of. On the physical side of things, several churches have temporary, somewhat primitive, and small facilities. But, they are growing in numbers and need help to expand their facilities. On the political side of things, many pastors say that the AMAA leadership in the US is not responsive enough to this particular need of theirs, and charge the AMAA with loss of spiritual vision for the spiritually lost of Armenia. One thing for sure, the church is actively witnessing for Christ, and at present, they are the existing centers of evangelism. At CACC, let us commit to help them to grow.



I also visited AMAA's new summer camp, a large and beautiful setting in the mountains. Some of the buildings are still being renovated. During my visit, the young adults were there for a one week retreat, from one of the districts. There were about 100 of them, and in their last day service and under the preaching of Rev. Melkonian, about 80% of them accepted the Lord as their Savior or rededicated themselves to the Lord. Two weeks earlier, there was a much larger group there from another district, with similar response for salvation. I talked with the pastors in the camp and learned that these are common happenings at the camp meetings. Praise the Lord. Rejoice with me, the future generation is in the hands of the Lord.

I visited a number of evangelical churches throughout Armenia and talked with more than a dozen pastors during my 25 day stay in the country. My time with the pastors was primarily a time of sharing, encouraging, praying and counseling on an individual basis. I listened to their needs and expectations, learned of their vision and we prayed together. It was a wonderful time of ministering to each other.

One major emphasis of the AMAA center of Yerevan, directed by Rev. Melkonian, is the training and equipping of the pastors. I participated in the mini-retreats dealing with how to lead a church service, how to preach effectively, church growth patterns, and pastoral responsibilities. I also gave a presentation in one of those mini-retreats on "Sin and the Believer" (from my current book). The presentation was followed by a lively discussion on the grace of God. I noticed a hidden need in these retreats and in my talking to individual pastors - the pastors need to develop spiritual insights and learn personally to walk spiritual lives in complete obedience and humility before the Lord. I fear this is being neglected, they are too concerned with the ministry responsibilities of their church and their pastoral image. This is understandable. Nevertheless, this area needs immediate regular attention. We have 30 evangelical pastors in Armenia and almost all came to

(continued on page 6)

Mission Update on the Armenian Evangelical Church in Armavir, Armenia *Alina Balabanian*



As many of you are already aware, our church has committed to prayerfully support and encourage the ministry of our sister church in Armavir, Armenia through AMAA's Sister Church program. We were paired with this church by Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian, who oversees the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Armenia. Rev. Melkonian informed us that this church is similar to us because it also is gifted in music ministry. Their church building is packed with people on Sunday mornings for worship.

During this past year we heard that our sister church was in need of a new laptop and projector for their worship and ministry purposes as the one they had was getting very old. They also expressed how during the hot summer months they needed to have a place where they could have their Bible studies, gatherings and fellowship. They noted that they were willing to do the labor themselves but

needed financial help to cover the costs of a patio. For this reason, our church decided to send money to help them build a covered patio outside the church. We recently received a letter from their pastor with these pictures telling us the project has been completed and expressing his gratitude. I was particularly touched by the following line: «Մենք բոլորս շատ ուրախացանք, ոչ միայն նրա համար, որ ուղարկուածները մեզ շատ անհրաժեշտ էին, այլ, որ Աստուած ձեր միջոցով իր հոգատարութիւնն է ցուցաբերում մեր նկատմամբ եւ եւս մէկ անգամ վստահեցնում, որ մեր պայքարների եւ դժուարութիւնների մէջ մենք մենակ չենք:» (Translation: "We all were very happy, not only for the necessities that you sent, but that through your support the Lord showed us His love for us through you and that he reminded us that we are not alone in our trials.") Seeing these pictures of our brothers and sisters in Christ - our own people worshipping and studying the Word of God under that patio and knowing that we were given the privilege and opportunity to contribute to God's Work in Armenia is amazing! Praise the Lord! Please CONTINUE TO HOLD OUR SISTER CHURCH IN PRAYER and may the Lord use our gifts to edify His church and bring people closer to Him. Please continue to pray that God would work in our church - our sister church - the Armenian Evangelical Church of Armavir and in our people in our beloved homeland of Armenia for His glory.

(continued from page five)

these retreats. You could see their eagerness and openness to learn and to grow. On one of these sessions, all the pastors came together as a single congregation singing and worshiping God together in adoration to the Lord. It was such an awesome time of praising God and spiritual bonding. I was blessed beyond my expectations.

Rev. Melkonian and his team are also working on new projects for the churches, such as Women's retreat, Men's retreat, and Couple's retreat for the near future. These would be totally new ministries to them. I encourage you to regularly pray for this team of sacrificially dedicated ministers and workers. Their work in the Lord is extensive and tiring and burdensome. They need our prayer support indeed.

Dear CACC family, I bring you a wonderful good news, the work of the Lord is moving forward in Armenia. This is visible. I beseech you, let us actively and intentionally join our Lord Jesus with our prayers, as He is interceding before the throne above, right now and always, for the lost in Armenia, and for the poor economic conditions there. As we are encouraged to do in the Word, let us give of ourselves and of our means to the missions calling of God upon CACC in spreading the gospel of love, peace and restoration.

To Him be the glory forever and ever

Medical Mission Trip to Armenia

Hera Kissayan

My trip to Armenia has forever changed my life. It was the most humbling and rewarding experience. I was in Armenia on a Medical Mission Trip with a team of about 35 people. To simply put it, our goal for this trip was to heal people spiritually and physically. We had mentally prepared ourselves before the trip that we were going to be unable to cure many patients we saw with medicine and therefore, the importance of sharing the gospel with them was crucial. To give these people hope of an eternal life meant more to our team than providing them with medical care. The structure of our trip was very simple: on the weekends we got to tour Armenia and during the weekdays we were setting up clinics and seeing patients. We travelled to two villages; Vanadzor and Stepanavan where we set up clinics in churches. We were in Vanadzor for 2.5 days and saw a total of 800 Patients and in Stepanavan for 2 days and saw 650 patients, a total of 1450 patients. Yes, the living conditions in Armenia are unbearable and heartbreaking, but there is a happiness within these people that I have never witnessed anywhere else. The people of Armenia have nothing and yet they were the most generous, genuine, giving, and welcoming people. I did not expect to go to Armenia and feel so deeply connected to the country and its people, therefore, I plan on continuing this amazing work in Armenia every year! I'm very excited to see how God is going to use my talents and knowledge in medicine and the healthcare field in Armenia over the years.



The 14th Biennial Convention of the Armenian Evangelical Women's Fellowship (Western Region) was held from October 2-4, 2015 at the Embassy Suites in San Luis Obispo, California. The theme for the weekend was "Reflecting God's Faithfulness: Praising the Lord through Blessings and Trials." The keynote speaker was Dr. Carolyn Johnson.

More than 130 women attended the conference which was a true blessing.

Calvary Armenian Congregational Church

ARMENIAN FOOD FESTIVAL

Saturday November 14, 2015 . 12:00 PM to 9:00PM

Live Folk Music & Dancing
Raffle with great prizes!

Free Admission

725 Brotherhood Way, San Francisco
(415) 586-2000 - CalvaryArmenianChurch.org

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

Or Current Resident



The Calvary Messenger is produced as a ministry update for our congregation and friends. Donations to offset printing and mailing costs are appreciated. Any comments, errors, omissions and/or newsworthy items may be addressed to the editors, care of the church office or sent via email to our box at cacc@calvaryarmenianchurch.org. Please check our website for current ministry information: <http://www.calvaryarmenianchurch.org>.

Church News

BIRTH

We congratulate Razmig and Jennifer for their newborn daughter, Ani Taleen Minassian, born on Thursday, August 6, 2015. Congratulations also to the grandparents.



WEDDING

We congratulate Danny and Aline (Kalebjian) Abajian, who were married on Saturday, July 18, 2015 at Glen Ellen, Sonoma. Our congratulations also to the parents.



CONDOLENCES

Mr. Edward Aslanian passed away on Friday, July 10, 2015. Our condolences and prayers to Mrs. Eleonore Aslanian and her entire family.

Mrs. Marie Ishkanian passed away on Monday, August 10, 2015. Our condolences and prayers to the Ishkanian, Bedrossian, Malikian and Kapreilian Families.

Mrs. Yevnige Salibian passed away on Saturday, August 29, 2015. Our condolences and prayers to the Salibian, Manoukian, and Aintablian Families.

Mr. Dean Prather (husband of Laura Khanjian) passed away on Thursday, October 22, 2015. Our condolences and prayers to the Prather, Terjimanian, Khanjian and Dodd Families.

UPCOMING COMMUNION SERVICES

Sunday, November 22
Sunday, January 3

